

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) A valve actuator for operating a gas exchange valve of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a valve stem;

a conical clamping sleeve;

a sleeve-shaped positioning piston connected to the valve stem;

at least two shell-shaped wedge pieces, which enclose a stem end of the valve stem, and whose radially outer peripheral surfaces have a conical segment which tapers off with increasing distance from the gas exchange valve and which is at least partially surrounded by the conical clamping sleeve having a mating conical inner surface and is connected to the positioning piston; and

a threaded bolt, the wedge pieces being axially form-fittingly and rotatably connected to the threaded bolt, the threaded bolt having at least one threaded segment via which the wedge pieces and the conical clamping sleeve are axially attachable to one another.

10. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 9, wherein the wedge pieces extend beyond the stem end as an axial extension of the valve stem and there partially encompass the threaded bolt axially in a form-fitting manner.

11. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 9, wherein the conical clamping sleeve is formed by the positioning piston, and the threaded segment at least partially engages with a mating thread on the positioning piston.

12. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 11, wherein the threaded segment extends in an axial direction on an outer periphery of the threaded bolt.

13. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 12, wherein at least one radial projection, which radially engages with at least one radial depression on an inner surface of the wedge pieces, is formed on the outer periphery of the threaded bolt.

14. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 13, wherein the at least one radial depression and the at least one radial projection have an annular shape.

15. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 14, wherein the at least one depression on the threaded bolt is situated in an area of its end facing the valve stem, and the threaded segment is behind the stem end, viewed in an axial direction from the gas exchange valve.

16. (New) The valve actuator according to claim 15, wherein three peripheral depressions are situated on the threaded bolt which each engage with three mating projections on the wedge pieces.